



**U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**

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## **Press Release**

06-30-2023

# **Covius Services Sued by EEOC for Disability Discrimination**

Employer Rejected Qualified Applicant Due to Disability and Related Medication Use, Federal Agency Charges

SEATTLE — Covius Services, LLC, a provider of services, solutions and technology for financial companies, violated federal law by rejecting a qualified applicant for a position in Spokane Valley, Washington because of her disability and need for prescribed medication, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) charged in a lawsuit filed June 29, 2023.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, Covius promptly scheduled Kelli Ebert for a job interview after an outside recruiter identified her as a qualified candidate for a customer service position. During the interview, Ebert shared that she had chronic conditions which required her to take prescribed pain management medication. Covius declined to hire her and explained to the recruiter that it did not hire Ebert, despite her experience, due to her use of these medications, the EEOC said. Around the same time, Covius hired at least two other applicants with similar or lesser qualifications in the same office.

Such alleged conduct violates the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which prohibits employers from refusing to hire qualified applicants due to an actual or perceived disability. The EEOC filed its lawsuit in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Washington (EEOC v. Covius Services, LLC, Case No. 2:23-cv-00186) after

first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its administrative conciliation process. The EEOC’s lawsuit seeks back pay, compensatory and punitive damages for Ebert, and injunctive relief designed to prevent such discrimination in the future.

“Fighting prejudice against people who need medication is an integral part of the EEOC’s work to eliminate employment barriers for workers with disabilities,” said EEOC Seattle Field Director Elizabeth Cannon. “The ADA protects employment opportunity for applicants who can accomplish the essential functions of the job, with or without reasonable accommodation.”

EEOC Senior Trial Attorney Amos Blackman added, “The law is clear. Rejecting an applicant for using medication to treat a physical impairment is a form of illegal disability discrimination. No one should have to choose between using a medication they need and getting a job for which they are qualified.”

The EEOC’s Seattle Field Office has jurisdiction over Washington, Alaska, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana.

For more information on disability discrimination, please visit

**<https://www.eeoc.gov/disability-discrimination> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/disability-discrimination>).**

The EEOC advances opportunity in the workplace by enforcing federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination. More information is available at **[www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov) (<http://www.eeoc.gov>)**. Stay connected with the latest EEOC news by subscribing to our **[email updates](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USEEOC/subscriber/new) (<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USEEOC/subscriber/new>)**.